THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM): (a) to (d) Yes, Sir. M/s. Coromandel Fertilisers Limited (CFL) has set up a liquid sulphur handling terminal at Vishakhapatnam at a cost of Rs. 10.50 crore in collaboration with M/s. Mitsui & Company, Japan. This project is the first of its kind in India. The reported advantages of the project are as follows:

(i) Elimination of sulphur dust pollution;

(ii) Enhanced safety through elimination of fire hazards in and around the installations.

(iii) Improved handling efficiency and a saving of 0.5% of the material lost as dust in the unloading of solid sulphur.

(iv) Faster turn around of vessels due to speedier unloading; and

(v) Energy saving on steam generation.

Import orders for rock phosphate

1891. SHRIMATI JAYPRADA NAHATA: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it has come to the notice of Government that the public sector company "Rashtriya Chemical and Fertilizers" has been placing its import orders for rock phosphate by deliberately inflating its prices; and

(b) if so, the detais thereof and the action taken against the officials involved in this scandal?

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM): (a) and (b) In accordance with Government Policy of Ocean Transportation, Rashtriya Chemicals and Fertilizers Ltd. (RCF) has been adopting a system of floating global tenders and obtaining competitive quotations for the purhcase of rock phosphate from international suppliers both on FOB and C&F basis. The best offers received in response are also being elvaluated strictly on techno-economic considerations. However, in the case of a recent purhcase made by RCF from Office Togolais Des Phosphate (OTP) Togo, an allegation that the freight component was pitched unrealistically low for inflating the FOB price has been brought to the notice of Government. On examination, it has been found that this is, prima facie, not substantiated. Therefore, the question of initiating any action against the officials of RCF has not arisen at this stage.

Oman-India Fertilizer Project

1892. SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE:
SHRI NILOTPAL BASU:

Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) the date of submission of bid in response to the Notification for Invitation to Tender documents (NIT) for selection of preferred bidder for Oman-India Fertilizer Project;

(b) the date of finalisation of bid;

(c) whether one of the bidders has challenged the bid evaluation process and requested for re-evaluation; and

(d) if yes, the critical issues of the evaluation process which have been challenged and Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM): (a) The dates of bid submission were as follows:

Nature of bid	Date of submission
(i) Technical Bids	27.09.1995
(ii) Unpriced commercial Bids.	25.10.1995

(iii) Final Priced Bids. 07.02.1998

(b) On 24.2.1997, the Joint Management Committee (JMC) of the Oman-India Fertilizer Project (OIFP) declared the consortium of Snamprogetti S.P.A., Italy and Technip S.A., France as the preferred Engineering, Procurement and Construction (EPC) Bidder for setting up OIFP on a lumpsum turn-key basis.

(c) and (d) In its representations to Oman Oil Company S.A.O.C. (Oman Oil) and the Ministry of Chemicals & Fertilizers, the consortium of Uhde, Gmbh Germany and George Wimpey International Ltd., U.K., (Uhde) had questioned the application of the loading criteria adopted for evalauation of the variations with reference to the terms of the notice inviting tender. The representation of Uhde was considered and rejected by Oman on 13.3.1997. On 21.4.1997 Uhde was informed by the Government that the selection of preferred bidder for OIFP has been made by the project authorities after following an objective criteria for evaluation and the matter did not call for any interference by the Government. Uhde has, however, pressed its case again.

Irregularities in Pyrites, Phosphates and Chemicals Ltd., Amjhore

1893. SHRI SANJAY NIRUPAM:
SHRI MUKESH R. PATEL:

Will the Minister of CHEMICALS & FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Governmnt are aware of the fact that 'Pyrites, Phosphates and Chemicals Limited Amjhore' in the district of Rohtas in Southern Bihar is running at loss and corrutpion is on high level;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) Government's action against the corruption?

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM): (a) to (c) The Single Superphosphate (SSP) unit of Pyrities, Phosphates & Chemicals Ltd. (PPCL) at Amjhore, which follows the high cost pyrities route for the production of sulphuric acid used in the manufacture of SSP, has been incurring losses since its inception. The details of the losses incurred since 1990-91 are as under:

	(Rs. in crore)
1990-91	0.26
1991-92	0.19
1992-93	9.42
1993-94	11.16
1994-95	6.12
1995-96	0.70
1996-97	2.63

There is no prima facie evidence of rampant corruption in the unit. Appropriate action is taken whenever any serious irregularity comes to light.

Import of Phosphate and Potash Fertilizers

1894. SHRI MUKESH R. PATEL:
SHRI SANJAY NIRUPAM:

Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government is going to import Phosphate and Potash fertilizer;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government have any plan for self production of the same fertilizer; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM): (a) and (b) Presently, there is no proposal for arranging the imports of phosphatic and potassic fertilizers on Government account. The imports of these fertilizers, which are de-canalised, are being made freely on trade account.